REMARKS

I.   Introduction

Claims 1, 2, 9, 11, 13 and 15 - 18 have been amended. No new matter has been added. Thus, claims 1- 19 remain pending in the present application. In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are allowable.

II.   The Claim Objections Should be Withdrawn

Claims 15 - 16 stand objected to because of informalities. *3/17/08 Office Action*, p. 2. Claims 15 and 16 have been amended to correct these informalities. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that claims 15 and 16 are in condition for allowance and that the objection to these claims should be withdrawn.

III.   The Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112 Should be Withdrawn

Claims 1, 2, 9, 11, 13 and 16 - 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. *3/17/08 Office Action*, p. 2. Specifically, the Examiner states that various limitations of these claims do not have sufficient antecedent basis. *Id.* at p. 3.

Claims 1, 2, 9, 11, 13 and 16 - 18 have been amended such that all limitations have sufficient antecedent basis and are in condition for allowance. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of these claims should be withdrawn.

IV.   The Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Should be Withdrawn

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over "HART, Field Communication Protocol, Application Guide" ("The Guide") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,909,591 to Brooke ("Brooke"). *3/17/08 Office Action*, p. 6.

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Amended claim 1 recites a method for automatically configuring a HART multidrop system, the system including a master device and a plurality of slave devices coupled to the master device, the method comprising the steps of "connecting the slave devices" and "switching on a power source of the master device for the slave devices" in combination with "*transmitting a HART command "Write polling address" as a broadcast command from the master device with a polling address not equal to zero, the HART command being preprogramed to cause the slave devices to (i) automatically switch to a multidrop mode and (ii) obtain an identical address not equal to zero*" and "*changing the identical addresses for the slave devices to a unique address for each slave device.*"

As conceded by the Examiner, The Guide does not disclose transmitting the HART command as a broadcast command such that each of the slaves obtains an identical address not equal to zero, which is changed to a unique address for each slave device. It is respectfully submitted that Brooke does not cure this deficiency.

In contrast, Brooke discloses the generation of an address based on coincidence. Specifically, Brooke teaches a modular system 100 comprising a controller 150 that has a polling generator 156 and a plurality of non-addressable slots 110-133 including power supply modules 140-147. *See Brooke*, col. 3, ll. 61 - col. 4, ll. 19; *see also* Fig. 1. A polling number generator 160- 167 generates a *random* polling number for each of the power supply modules 140-147, respectively. *Id.* at col. 4, ll.. The polling generator 156 then polls each of the polling number generators 160-167 to determines which of the power supply modules 140-147 has a particular value, obtains an identification for the power supply module 140-147 *when only one of the power supply modules has the particular polling number* and assigns a logical identification number *to the one power supply* module. *Id.* at col. 4, ll. 33-45. A new particular value is then selected and the process of polling, obtaining and generating is repeated. *Id.* at col. 4, ll. 45-49. Once the polling generator 156 completes the polling of all possible values, the process begins again such that those power supply modules 140-147 that have not been assigned an identification number again selects a random polling number. Thus, as each of the power supply modules 140-147

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obtains a random polling number, each of the power supply modules 140-147 cannot possibly have an identical number. As the power supply modules 140-147 do not have identical numbers, Brooke does not teach changing identical addresses to a unique address.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that neither The Guide nor Brooke, either alone or in combination, show or suggest a *"transmitting a HART command "Write polling address" as a broadcast command from the master device with a polling address not equal to zero, the HART command being preprogramed to cause the slave devices to (i) automatically switch to a multidrop mode and (ii) obtain an identical address not equal to zero"* and *"changing the identical addresses for the slave devices to a unique address for each slave device,"* as recited in claim 1.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is not rendered obvious by The Guide in view of Brooke and that the rejection of this claim should be withdrawn.

Claims 2 - 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over The Guide in view of "About HART: Part 1"("About HART") and Brooke. *3/17/08 Office Action*, p. 8.

Claim 2 recites a method for automatically configuring an existing HART multidrop system, the system including (i) a master device, (ii) a plurality of slave devices connected to the master device and (iii) at least one further slave device, the method comprising the steps of "connecting the at least one further slave device" and "switching off a power source of the master device for the slave devices if the power source is switched on" in combination with "switching on the power source for the slave devices" and *"transmitting a HART command "Write polling address" as a broadcast command from the master device with a polling address not equal to zero, the HART command being preprogramed to cause the slave devices connected to the master device to (i) automatically switch to a multidrop mode and (ii) obtain an identical address not equal to zero"* along with *"changing the identical addresses for the slave devices to a unique address for each slave device."*

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For at least the same reasons as discussed above in regard to claim 1, it is respectfully submitted that claim 2 is not rendered obvious by The Guide in view of About HART and Brooke and that the rejection of this claim should be withdrawn. Because claims 3 - 10 depend from and include all of the limitations of claim 2, it is respectfully submitted that these claims are also allowable.

Similalry, claim 11 recites a HART multidrop system, comprising "a plurality of slave devices" and "a master device having a power source for the slave devices, the slave devices being coupled to the master device" in combination with "a control unit switching on the power source to automatically configure the HART multidrop system and *transmits a HART command "Write polling address" as a broadcast command with a polling address not equal to zero, the HART command causing each of the slave devices connected to the master device to be automatically switched to a multidrop mode and receive an identical address not equal to zero, the identical addresses for the slave devices capable of being changed to individual addresses for each of the slave devices.*"

For at least the same reasons as described above in regard to claim 1, it is respectfully submitted that claim 11 is not rendered obvious by The Guide in view of About HART and Brooke and that the rejection of this claim should be withdrawn. Because claims 12 - 19 depend from and include all of the limitations of claim 11, it is respectfully submitted that these claims are also allowable.

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CONCLUSION

It is therefore respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are allowable. All issues raised by the Examiner having been addressed, an early and favorable action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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